

been dedicated to them, and she understands these issues on a deeply personal level. She knows them inside and out because she served to fight for them inside and out of the DOJ, inside and out of the New York Attorney General's Office, inside and out of the organization whose mission is to protect them, and she is the daughter of immigrants who grew up in the Nation's largest public housing complex. She is also the mother of a 16-year-old son, who is growing up in this moment of reckoning for racial justice, equality, and equity in America.

If memory serves me, she also once took a field trip to the Hartford area, in Connecticut, and watched a then comparatively young State attorney general who was arguing in court in a desegregation case. Now, I have no illusions that this experience played any part in her desire to use her extraordinary skills and talents and gifts and education as a public servant and lawyer for the public good, but that has been her career, and that is exactly what we need now at the helm of the Civil Rights Division.

There is no excuse for waiting another moment to confirm her to this most important post. She is the civil rights chief for this moment because we are in a moment of reckoning. Justice, equity, and equality are on the line now, and her strength and tenacity meet this moment.

Unfortunately, there are some on the other side who have used Ms. Clarke's nomination to make baseless allegations against her, including allegations that she supports abolishing the police. To support this distortion, they have repeatedly invoked a 2020 op-ed written by Ms. Clarke and published by Newsweek. I want to meet that article head on because, at our Judiciary Committee's markup just 2 weeks ago, Senator CRUZ selectively excerpted portions of that op-ed, claiming that they demonstrated that Ms. Clarke "explicitly" advocated abolishing the police.

There is only one problem with this argument: Ms. Clarke never wrote that. It just isn't true. Ms. Clarke's piece is a thoughtful call to rethink how we approach law enforcement in a country that is going through a moment in which thousands of Americans have called out for real reform, real change, real action.

I have been proud to be involved in peaceful demonstrations and rallies throughout the State of Connecticut—probably 20 or maybe more of them over the last summer—when young people led these public calls for justice in policing, justice in housing, justice in the workplace, and justice in healthcare—all of them implicated in this moment.

The fact is the word "abolition" appears only once in the entire op-ed. That word appears once in the op-ed—"abolition"—when it is used to describe the huge range of views held by others, activists and local governments. That is it. That word "aboli-

tion" is used to describe the views of others, not her views.

Senator CRUZ has also distorted her record in another way in claiming she had written a provocative email comparing the police to the Ku Klux Klan. That is simply not true. In reality, the passage Senator CRUZ quoted was written by someone else—an activist—in an essay that Ms. Clarke had simply forwarded in an email. In the email, the subject line includes the actual author's name, and the essay is signed at the end by the author.

Had Senator CRUZ bothered to look at the entirety of the email and of that document instead of cherry-picking a line to fit his preconceived narrative, he would have known, and it would have been truer to the facts here. Ms. Clarke no more wrote the words Senator CRUZ attributed to her than he did.

At a time when the country faces a moment of reckoning over racial justice, the Civil Rights Division needs someone with Ms. Clarke's knowledge, skill, dexterity of thinking, life experience, heart, and dedication because these challenges are immense and they need to be addressed. She is the person for this moment. That is exactly what she will do, address the need for equity and equality in civil rights enforcement. She will be tenacious but thoughtful and insightful and true to the law, serving the rule of law. She is a dedicated and devoted public servant, committed to equal justice, civil rights, and the rule of law.

I have seen that firsthand, and I know I am not the only one who thinks so. The letters the Judiciary Committee has received in support of her nomination reflect a broad, professionally and ideologically diverse coalition of individuals and organizations that know that she is, without a doubt, eminently qualified for this position.

That support includes law enforcement, like the Major Cities Chiefs Association, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives, the Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association, and 71 former attorneys general from red States and blue States.

The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives wrote:

Ms. Clarke has displayed the qualities of leadership, empathy, excellence, and persistence in supporting and defending the U.S. Constitution while ensuring equal protection and justice for all Americans.

The 71 former attorneys general wrote:

Kristen Clarke is someone with immense credibility among community leaders in each of our states—she has handled cases of hate crimes, constitutional policing, human trafficking, and voting rights, and, most recently, has done effective work on violent extremism and the threat that it poses to our citizens.

I believe strongly that Kristen Clarke should be confirmed right away, without delay, and I encourage all of

my colleagues to see the baseless allegations against her for what they are—a distortion—and I urge them to support her nomination. I have confronted those allegations. They are unworthy of repetition, but I think my colleagues should know the truth behind them. The Civil Rights Division and the American people need Kristen Clarke.

For me, this vote feels very personal. Two of my four children are graduating literally today and during this week from law school. I hope they will use the great gifts that they have, the skills that they have acquired, and the advocacy that they have been learning to advance the public interests in the way that Kristen Clarke has done throughout her extraordinary career. I hope they will regard her as a role model because she has sought justice.

She has fought to uphold the rights of people who are vulnerable, Americans who are voiceless, and ordinary Americans, who all too often have been denied their rights. She has stood up for them; she has spoken out; and I hope we will confirm her tomorrow with a bipartisan vote.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### REMEMBERING DR. PETER B. LYONS

• Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, it is my honor to recognize the life of Dr. Peter B. Lyons, a steadfast and selfless public servant, who over the course of an unparalleled and distinguished career at Los Alamos National Laboratory, the U.S. Senate, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the U.S. Department of Energy, made numerous contributions to the field of nuclear physics, to the State of New Mexico, and to our country's nuclear energy community.

In 2010, Dr. Lyons was confirmed as the Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy. As Assistant Secretary, he focused on incorporating modeling and